



**Solicitation Information
June 16, 2014**

RFP# 7548805

TITLE: Prepare a Biennial Employment & Training Plan for the State of Rhode Island

Submission Deadline: Wednesday, July 9, 2014 at 2:00 PM

PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE: YES. Friday, June 27, 2014 at 10:30 AM (ET)

MANDATORY: NO

LOCATION: Department of Administration, Division of Purchases Bid Room, 2nd Floor, One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908

QUESTIONS:

Questions concerning this solicitation may be submitted to gail.walsh@purchasing.ri.gov no later than Friday, June 27, 2014 at 5:00 PM (ET). Questions should be submitted in a *Microsoft Word attachment*. Please reference the RFP# on all correspondence. Questions received, if any, will be posted on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information.

Note to Applicants:

Applicants must register on-line at the State Purchasing Website at www.purchasing.ri.gov

Proposals received without the entire completed four-page RIVIP Generated Bidder Certification Form attached may result in disqualification. This form is may be downloaded at www.purchasing.ri.gov .

GAIL WALSH
CHIEF BUYER

THIS PAGE IS NOT A BIDDER CERTIFICATION FORM

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SECTION 1: BACKGROUND

The **Governor's Workforce Board** (GWB) is soliciting proposals from qualified bidders to convene stakeholders, collect and analyze data, and prepare content for the Biennial Employment & Training Plan for the State of Rhode Island (FY2016-FY2017). This plan must be submitted to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before November 15, 2014.

The GWB was established by Executive Order on September 22, 2005. The GWB consists of 18 members representing business, labor, education, community, and government, who comprise the State Workforce Investment Board (which oversees federal Workforce Investment Act Title I-B funds) and the Human Resource Investment Council (which oversees state Job Development Funds).

The GWB is the primary policy-making body on workforce development matters for the State of Rhode Island, and has statutory responsibility and authority to plan, coordinate, fund, and evaluate workforce development activities in the State. The GWB is also responsible for administering the Job Development Fund -- a state fund financed by an assessment on employer contributions into the RI Employment Security Fund -- to support education and training programs that increase the skills of the RI workers and address the workforce needs of RI businesses.

The **Biennial Employment & Training Plan for the State of Rhode Island** is required by RIGL 42-102-9, which provides that:

(h) The council shall biennially develop an employment and training plan for the state to be submitted to the governor and the general assembly commencing March 15, 2012 and covering the subsequent two fiscal years. Subsequent biennial plans shall be submitted on November 15. The biennial plan shall outline goals and objectives of the coordinated programs system, major priorities needed for the next two (2) year period, and policies and requirements necessary to meet those priorities. The council shall provide a funding plan necessary to achieve system priorities and to serve the anticipated number of participants and shall identify the general revenue funds necessary to meet program needs, taking into account anticipated federal, private and other sources of funds. The biennial plan shall incorporate the annual Unified Workforce Development Expenditure and Program Report in those years in which both reports are due.

(i) The council shall develop and maintain a comprehensive inventory and analysis of workforce development activities in the state to support the biennial report in subsection 42-102-9(h). The analysis shall include, but not be limited to, an examination of the populations being served across the different employment and training and adult education programs across the state, the number of participants being served by these programs, the type of services provided and the eligibility requirements of each of these programs. The analysis shall also identify the funding sources (all sources) used in these programs, the service providers within the state, as well as the range of services provided. The analysis shall also examine the employer role in workforce development activities, including, but not limited to, how employer needs are assessed, benefits employers receive for partnering with workforce development organizations, and the role employers play in development and training.

(j) The council shall establish and convene an advisory group to assist in the development of the analysis that consists of stakeholders and organizations with specific knowledge and expertise in the area of workforce development.

(k) All departments and agencies of the state shall furnish advice and information, documentary or otherwise to the council and its agents as is deemed necessary or desirable by the council to facilitate the purposes of the council as defined in subsection 42-109-9(i).

SECTION 2: INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS

1. Potential vendors are advised to review all sections of this RFP carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.
2. Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this RFP will be rejected as being non-responsive.
3. All costs associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content shall be borne by the vendor. The State assumes no responsibility for these costs.
4. Proposals are considered to be irrevocable for a period of not less than 90 days following the opening date, and may not be withdrawn, except with the express written permission of the State Purchasing Agent.
5. All pricing submitted will be considered to be firm and fixed unless otherwise indicated herein.
6. It is intended that an award pursuant to this RFP will be made to a prime vendor, or prime vendors in the various categories, who will assume responsibility for all aspects of the work. Joint venture and cooperative proposals will not be considered. Subcontracts are permitted, provided that their use is clearly indicated in the vendor's proposal and the subcontractor(s) to be used is identified in the proposal.
7. All proposals must include the vendor's FEIN or Social Security number as evidenced by a W9, downloadable from the Division's website at www.purchasing.ri.gov.
8. All proposals must include a completed and signed four-page R.I.V.I.P generated bidder certification cover sheet which may be downloaded at www.purchasing.ri.gov.
9. The purchase of services under an award made pursuant to this RFP will be contingent on the availability of funds.
10. Vendors are advised that all materials submitted to the State for consideration in response to this RFP will be considered to be Public Records as defined in Title 38, Chapter 2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, without exception, and will be released for inspection immediately upon request once an award has been made.
11. Interested parties are instructed to peruse the Division of Purchases website on a regular basis, as additional information relating to this solicitation may be released in the form of an addendum to this RFP.

12. The Vendor must have sufficient liability insurance coverage and/or be bonded.
13. Equal Employment Opportunity (G.L. 1956 § 28-5.1-1, et seq.) – § 28-5.1-1 Declaration of policy –
(a) Equal opportunity and affirmative action toward its achievement is the policy of all units of Rhode Island state government, including all public and quasi-public agencies, commissions, boards and authorities, and in the classified, unclassified, and non-classified services of state employment. This policy applies to all areas where State dollars are spent, in employment, public services, grants and financial assistance, and in state licensing and regulation. For further information, contact the Rhode Island Equal Opportunity Office at (401)222-3090 or Raymond.lambert@hr.ri.gov.
14. In accordance with Title 7, Chapter 1.2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, no foreign corporation, a corporation without a Rhode Island business address, shall have the right to transact business in the State until it shall have procured a Certificate of Authority to do so from the Rhode Island Secretary of State (401-222-3040). *This is a requirement only of the successful vendor(s).*
15. The vendor should be aware of the State’s Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) requirements, which address the State’s goal of ten percent (10%) participation by MBE’s in all State procurements. For further information, contact the MBE Administrator at (401) 574-8253 or visit the website www.mbe.ri.gov or contact charles.newton@doa.ri.gov.
16. Contractual Terms and Conditions. GWB intends to execute a contract (“Contract”) with the successful Proposer. GWB may require that the RFP and the terms and conditions attached to it, the Proposer’s response, the best and final offer (if required), and any formal addenda to the RFP be included as part of any contract documents.
17. Proposals misdirected to other state locations, or which are otherwise not present at the time of opening for any cause will be determined to be late and will not be considered. For the purposes of this requirement, the official time and date shall be that of the time clock in the reception area of the Division of Purchases.

SECTION 3: SCOPE OF WORK

A. Objectives

The GWB is required by statute to develop a biennial employment and training plan for the state that outlines the needs of employers and workers and establishes goals and objectives for the workforce development system. The Plan establishes the major priorities for the next two (2) fiscal years, as well as the policies and action steps necessary to achieve those priorities.

The elements of the Biennial Plan are to include:

- current and projected workforce needs of Rhode Island employers, and related trends;
- education, training, and skill levels of Rhode Island workers, and related trends;
- education, training, and skill gaps between the needs of Rhode Island employers and workers;
- current workforce development services, expenditures, and outcomes in Rhode Island;
- identification of gaps in workforce development services;

- progress report and evaluation of the priorities and action steps identified in the *FY2014-15 Biennial Employment & Training Plan*; and,
- recommendation of priorities and action steps needed to address skills gaps and enhance workforce development services in Fiscal Years 2016-2017

B. Recommended Methodology

- Inclusion of stakeholders , partner organizations, and key subject experts associated with the policy, administration, and delivery of the state’s workforce development services.
- Establishment and/or engagement of sub-committees in relevant subject matter areas such as education and training, employment, and/or economic development.
- Collection and analysis of relevant data and trends (including workforce demand, supply, services, and gaps)
- Literature review, including state plans and reports, labor market information, skills gap studies, and state and national best practices.
- Qualitative and quantitative review and progress on FY2014-15 Biennial Plan Action Steps.
- Draft FY2016-17 Biennial Plan Priorities, Recommendations, and Action Steps.
- Review and finalize recommendations with stakeholders and GWB Board.

C. Estimated Timeline

RFP Issued, Posted to RI Division of Purchases website	June 16, 2014
Pre-Proposal Conference	June 27, 2014 at 10:30 AM
Deadline for receipt of proposals	July 9, 2014 at 2:00 PM
Anticipated decision date	July 16, 2014
Contract period	August 1, 2014 – October 31, 2014

D. Deliverables

Proposer will be expected to work closely with, and under the direction of, the Executive Director of the Governor’s Workforce Board. The proposer is to provide a proposed project management plan and timeline to include the following required tasks:

1. Convene and facilitate meetings of stakeholder group
2. Convene and facilitate subcommittee meetings
3. Identify data needs and sources
4. Collect and analyze data
5. Conduct review of relevant workforce and economic development plans and reports.
6. Write analysis of employer demand, workforce supply, workforce expenditures and services, and gaps
7. Write progress report on action steps from FY14-15 Biennial Plan.
8. Draft recommendations, priorities and action steps for FY16-17 Biennial Plan.
9. Review and finalize recommendations with stakeholders and GWB Board.
10. Develop final FY16-17 Biennial Plan, including Executive Summary, narrative, relative charts and graphs, citations, appendices, and accompanying slide and poster board presentations

Please note: Initial planning, outreach, and data collection for the FY16-17 Biennial Plan will be started by the GWB prior to the contract period. In addition, the successful proposer will receive support from the GWB and partner agencies to identify data, reports, stakeholders, subject matter experts, and other resources for the development of the Biennial Plan.

SECTION 4: PROPOSAL CONTENT AND FORMAT

This proposal narrative should not exceed **15 pages**, 1½ spaced text, in Arial font size 11 with 1" margins on all sides. This page limit includes the cover letter, background, experience, team members, methodology, analysis, and timeline. It does not include the resumes, references, cost proposal, certifications, or other attachments.

The following should be included in your response:

1. **Cover letter.** The proposer shall furnish a cover letter to introduce the firm or individual, its qualifications, and a general overview of the proposal.
2. **Background.** The firm or individual's name and address, including contact information for the primary point of contact for the project. Please include a brief history, size and scope of the firm, current projects, resources, number of employees, and focus of services.
3. **Experience.** A description and/or examples of the applicant's relevant experience in all aspects of developing plans and reports related to workforce development. Include a description of the applicant's experience with facilitation of meetings and processes involving multiple stakeholders; data collection and analysis; production of charts, graphs, and narrative content.
4. **Team Members.** A list of Individual team members who will be assigned and directly involved on this project, their anticipated role, percent of time dedicated to the project, qualifications, and their past experience on similar projects. Provide resumes/CV and describe qualifications and relevant experience of key staff who will be involved in this project.
5. **Methodology.** Provide a description of the overall methodology. Include a high level description of how the work will be executed (process, deliverables, etc.) Describe the likely challenges in this project and how they will be overcome.
6. **Analysis.** Provide a concise evaluation of the FY14-15 Biennial Plan, including strengths and weaknesses. Describe how the FY16-17 Biennial Plan could build and improve upon the FY14-15 Biennial Plan.
7. **Timeline.** Provide a detailed timeline for the project, including an outline of the process, interim deliverables, and estimated completion date for the project.
8. **Cost Proposal.** Include a schedule and explanation of fees and costs related to the project, with a detailed, itemized budget breakout identifying the total cost of project. **Note: Proposals in excess of \$40,000 will not be considered.**
9. **References.** Provide three (3) client references from previous work including organization name, name of contact, phone number, email address, description of services provided, term of service, result, and any other relevant information. References should be able to speak to your ability to effectively produce workforce development-related plans and reports on time and within budget. GWB is especially interested in references that can attest to the proposer's ability and performance in similar work with similar types of organizations and timelines.
10. **Additional Information.** The proposer may list any additional information or data not requested as part of this document quote for services, which the proposer believes should be considered in the evaluation of the response.

11. **Ethics.** GWB and its Board of Directors and staff are committed to maintaining the highest standard of ethics in the awarding of contracts. In accordance therewith GWB requires that the Proposer certify the following:

“Neither the Proposer nor any officer, employee, agent, representative or affiliate of the Proposer has given or offered or shall give or offer to any Board Member, employee, or representative of GWB or to any family member of the foregoing, or to any business by which any of the foregoing persons are employed, or to any official of the State of Rhode Island who is subject to the State Code of Ethics, any gift, loan, political contribution, reward, or promise of future employment based on any understanding or expectation that the vote, official action, or judgment of the person would be influenced thereby, and, that no officer, employee, agent, representative, or affiliate of the Proposer shall have any direct or indirect non-incidental contact with any member of the board of directors of GWB during any period of time after commencement of the procurement process and prior to GWB’s award of the Contract, except at a public meeting of the Board of Directors of GWB or at a meeting of a subcommittee of the Board of Directors.”

Any contact direct or indirect contact at a public meeting or subcommittee meeting of GWB shall not concern procurement. Any violation of the foregoing shall result in immediate disqualification of the Proposer.

12. **Period of Validity.** Each Proposer's Proposal must include a statement as to the period during which the provisions of its proposal will remain valid. A minimum of 90 days from the Closing Date for Receipt of Proposals is required.

SECTION 5: RESOURCES

The following resources may be of assistance in preparing a response to this RFP:

[GWB Biennial Employment & Training Plan \(FY2014-2015\)](#)

[Unified Workforce Development Expenditure & Program Report \(UEP\)](#)

[GWB Industry Partnership Skills Gap Studies](#)

[Department of Labor & Training Labor Market Information](#)

[RhodeMap RI](#)

- [Economic Intersections of Rhode Island](#)
- [An Equity Profile of Rhode Island](#)
- [Economy RI: Economic Data Analysis & Assessment](#)

SECTION 6: SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals will be reviewed by a Technical Review Committee comprised of workforce development professionals convened by the GWB. This committee will review all proposals and recommend an individual or firm to facilitate stakeholder meetings and develop the Biennial Employment & Training Plan (FY2016-17) for the State of Rhode Island. Final selection will be made based on the lowest cost qualified bid; experience and expertise in similar plan development; and demonstrated ability to provide results.

To advance to the Cost Evaluation phase, the Technical Proposal must receive a minimum of 65 out of a maximum of 75 technical points. Any technical proposals scoring less than 65 points will not have the cost component reviewed, and the proposal will be dropped from further consideration.

Proposals scoring 65 technical points or higher will be evaluated for cost and assigned up to a maximum of 25 points in cost category, bringing the potential maximum score to 100 points.

The Governor's Workforce Board reserves the exclusive right to select the individual(s) or firm (vendor) that it deems to be in its best interest to accomplish the project as specified herein; and conversely, reserves the right not to fund any proposal(s).

Proposals will be reviewed and scored based upon the following criteria:

Criteria	Possible Points
Proposer Qualifications and Relevant Experience (description of proposer, resumes, references, examples of prior work)	25 Points
Quality of Proposed Methodology and Time Line	25 Points
Analysis (evaluation of FY14-15 Biennial Plan; opportunities for improvements in FY16-17 Biennial Plan)	25 Points
Total Possible Technical Points	75 Points
Cost calculated as lowest responsive cost proposal divided by (this cost proposal) times 25 points *	25 Points
Total Possible Points	100 Points

*The Low bidder will receive one hundred percent (100%) of the available points for cost. All other bidders will be awarded cost points based upon the following formula:

$$(\text{low bid} / \text{vendors bid}) * \text{available points}$$

For example: If the low bidder (Vendor A) bids \$30,000 and Vendor B bids \$40,000 and the total points available are twenty-five (25), vendor B's cost points are calculated as follows:

$$\$30,000 / \$40,000 * 25 = 18.75$$

Points will be assigned based on the proposer's clear demonstration of his/her abilities to complete the work, apply appropriate methods to complete the work, create innovative solutions and quality of past performance in similar projects.

Applicants may be required to submit additional written information or be asked to make an oral presentation before the technical review committee to clarify statements made in their proposal.

SECTION 7: PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Questions concerning this solicitation may be e-mailed to the Division of Purchases at gail.walsh@purchasing.ri.gov no later than the date and time indicated on Page One of this solicitation. Please reference **RFP #7548805** on all correspondence. Questions should be submitted in a Microsoft Word attachment. Answers to questions received, if any, will be posted on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information. If technical assistance is required to download, call the Help Desk at (401) 222-3766 or lynda.moore@doit.ri.gov.

Offerors are encouraged to submit written questions to the Division of Purchases. **No other contact with State parties will be permitted.** Interested offerors may submit proposals to provide the services covered by this Request on or before the date and time listed on the cover page of this solicitation. Responses received after this date and time, as registered by the official time clock in the reception area of the Division of Purchases will not be considered.

Responses (**an original plus four copies**) should be mailed or hand-delivered in a sealed envelope marked “**RFP #7548805 - Prepare a Biennial Employment & Training Plan for the State of Rhode Island**” to:

RI Dept. of Administration
Division of Purchases, 2nd Floor
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908

NOTE: Proposals received after the previously referenced due date and time will not be considered. Proposals misdirected to other State locations or those not presented to the Division of Purchases by the scheduled due date and time will be determined to be late and will not be considered. Proposals faxed or e-mailed to the Division of Purchases will not be considered. The official time clock is in the reception area of the Division of Purchases.

Response Contents

1. A completed and signed four-page **RIVIP generated bidder certification** cover sheet downloaded from the RI Division of Purchases website at: www.purchasing.ri.gov.
2. A completed and signed **W-9** downloaded from the RI Division of Purchases website at www.purchasing.ri.gov. **Please include with original proposal only.**
3. A **letter of transmittal** signed by the owner, officer, or authorized agent of the firm or organization, acknowledging and accepting the terms and conditions of this Request, and tendering an offer to the State.
4. A separate **Technical Proposal** describing the qualifications and background of the applicant and experience with and for similar projects, and all information described earlier in this solicitation.
5. A **separate, signed and sealed Cost Proposal** reflecting the hourly rate, or other fee structure, proposed to complete all of the requirements of this project.

6. In addition to the multiple hard copies of proposals required, Respondents are requested to provide their proposal in ***electronic format (CDRom, diskette, or flash drive)***. Microsoft Word / Excel or PDF format is preferable. Only 1 electronic copy is requested and it should be placed in the proposal marked "original."

SECTION 8: CONCLUDING STATEMENTS

Notwithstanding the above, the State reserves the right not to award this contract or to award on the basis of cost alone, to accept or reject any or all proposals, and to award in its best interest.

Proposals found to be technically or substantially non-responsive at any point in the evaluation process will be rejected and not considered further.

The State may, at its sole option, elect to require presentation(s) by offerors clearly in consideration for award.

The State's General Conditions of Purchase contain the specific contract terms, stipulations and affirmations to be utilized for the contract awarded to the RFP. The State's General Conditions of Purchases/General Terms and Conditions can be found at the following URL:
<https://www.purchasing.ri.gov/RIVIP/publicdocuments/ATTA.pdf>